

Message Text

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USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE
HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN

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SECDEF FOR ASD/PA:ROSS; USIA FOR IEU; SHAPE FOR
COL. ZURAWSKI; EUCOM FOR CAPT. GARROW; USNATO FOR
USIS:CLAUSSEN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OCON, MILL, NATO, SOPN
SUBJECT: GERMAN TANK GUN

REF: USNATO OO281

1. FOLLOWING IS A FULL TRANSLATION OF A FRONT-PAGE
ARTICLE FROM BRUSSELS IN TODAY'S DIE WELT:
2. DIE WELT UNDER THE HEADLINE "GERMAN GUN WAS BEST IN
SHOOTING TEST."
"IN A TEST IN THE UNITED STATES, THE GERMAN
'LEOPARD-2' 120 MM TANK GUN CLEARLY PROVED TO BE THE
BEST WESTERN MODEL. THAT HAS BECOME KNOWN FROM NATO
QUARTERS IN BRUSSELS. THE SMOOTHBORE CANNON DEVELOPED
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BY THE RHEINMETALL COMPANY SURPASSED NOT ONLY THE AMERI-
CAN 105 MM GUN, WHICH IS GRADUALLY BECOMING OBSOLETE,
BUT ALSO THE BRAND NEW BRITISH 120 MM RIFLED-BORE GUN.
THE BRITISH GUN HAD RECEIVED SO MUCH ADVANCE PRAISE
THAT ITS CREW WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED BY THE OUTCOME OF
THE SHOOTING TEST.

3. "TEST CONDITIONS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BY THE U.S. ARMY. THEY PROVIDED FOR SHOOTING WITH REDUCED CHARGES AT TANK STEEL UNDER VARIOUS ANGLES SO AS TO ESTABLISH REALISTIC CONDITIONS. THE AMMUNITION USED WAS SO-CALLED WING-STABILIZED IMPACT AMMUNITION. THE PENETRATION EFFECT PRODUCED BY THE RHEINMETALL CANNON WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN 'CLEARLY SUPERIOR.'

4. "THE TEST SHOULD ENABLE THE U.S. ARMY TO INFORM CONGRESS BY JANUARY 31 WHICH GUN THE AMERICAN XM-1 TANK SHOULD BE EQUIPPED WITH. THERE IS, HOWEVER, SUBSTANTIAL RESISTANCE IN CONGRESS AS WELL AS IN THE U.S. ARMY TO INTRODUCING A FOREIGN-MADE WEAPON. THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC WOULD BE READY TO GRANT THE UNITED STATES A LICENSE FREE OF CHARGE FOR PRODUCING THE RHEINMETALL GUN. EXPERTS HAVE POINTED OUT THAT THE XM-1 HARDLY COULD BE EQUIPPED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY WITH ORDNANCE BIGGER THAN THE AMERICAN 105 MM GUN." STOESEL

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